Trivandrum port came next in activity after Alleppey, Quilon third and Colachel last. In 1103 Colachel suddenly leapt forward to second position after Alleppey, Trivandrum coming next and Quilon last. There is an explanation for this sudden rise of Colachel and for the set-back to Quilon. The tonnage at Colachel rose from 42,095 in 1102 to 78,034 in 1103, while the number of steamships rose from 12 to 24. As between 1927 and 1928 there was an increase of about 45,000 tons of which nearly 30,000 tons represented ocean-going vessels and 15,000, coasting steamers. This sudden growth in Colachel port is due to larger exports of ilmenite and zircon sands, for the export of which revised arrangements were recently made with the principal firm working these sands to enable them to meet the growing demand. Quilon port languished owing to larger shipments of salt from South Travancore being diverted from that port to Alleppey and to the transport of salt by road as also owing to the growing reluctance of merchants to ship tiles and import iron, hardware and rice for want of landing and shipping facilities.

The Alleppey "mud-bank."

9. Some apprehension was felt over a phenomenon which has not been previously unknown at Alleppey port. In August last, following upon heavy seas and strong littoral currents from the south-west, there settled round about the pier some of the fine oily mud which is always in a state of suspension off and along the Alleppey coast and which ensures its smooth waters. This shoaling of the fine mud made it necessary at low tide for loaded cargo boats to be hauled out by mechanical means from the head of the pier into deep water through what I might call an emulsion extending a few hundred feet. Shipping was in no way hampered and by the end of the year conditions became normal.

Advantageous Situation of the Travancore Ports.

10. Before I pass from the subject of ports and shipping I may mention as a matter of general interest that the Travancore ports possess one great advantage because of their situation in relation to the ocean highways traversed by shipping between Colombo, Europe, America, Australia and the Far East with special reference to the Suez Canal. Ships need make only a slight deviation from their set course to touch India at one of the Travancore ports. For instance, Colachel is only nine miles off the main ocean route, Trivandrum only fourteen, Quilon only twenty-three and Alleppey only forty-five miles. Also apart from the time saved by the shortness of the detour, the period of stay can be brief as ships can enter a port, anchor within easy distance of the shore and stand out to the open sea again soon after loading.

Forests.

11. The natural regeneration of valuable species of timber was satisfactory. Artificial reproduction of teak under the Taungya system was equally encouraging. The year witnessed the largest out-turn in the exploitation of timber during the past quinquennium. Over a million

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